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LETTER DATED 11 NOVEMBER 1998 FROM THE SECRETARY-GENERAL ADDRESSED TO THE PRESIDENT OF THE SECURITY COUNCIL

Following the withdrawal of the United Nations Observer Mission in Liberia (UNOMIL) at the end of September 1997, the first United Nations post-conflict peace-building support office was established in Liberia on 1 November 1997, with the Council's blessing. On 12 December 1997, I appointed Mr. Felix Downes-Thomas (Gambia) to head this office, formally known as the United Nations Peace-building Support Office in Liberia (UNOL), and to serve as my Representative in the country.

As contemplated in the Office's terms of reference, UNOL activities during the past year have focused on the consolidation of peace; promoting reconciliation and the strengthening of democratic institutions; support for local human rights initiatives; political support for efforts to mobilize international resources and assistance for national recovery and reconstruction; and working to promote a coordinated and focused effort by the United Nations system in the country on matters related to peace-building.

Since the establishment of the Office, my Representative has been especially active in efforts to reduce tensions between Liberia and some of its neighbours, while also working to help reduce tensions that have at times arisen between the Government of Liberia and the Monitoring Group (ECOMOG) of the Economic Community of West African States. At the request of the Government of Liberia and civil society groups, UNOL played an active role in the discussions that took place on the establishment of the Liberia Human Rights Commission. UNOL played an important supportive role at the donors conference convened last April by the World Bank and the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), underscoring the link between development efforts and peace-building concerns. Most recently, the Office has continued to be involved in efforts to promote reconciliation and to calm tensions in the wake of the disturbances that occurred in Monrovia on 18 September 1998 and afterwards.

In view of the important and very positive role currently being played by UNOL, as well as the country's continuing need for special support, it is my

intention to extend the mandate of UNOL for a further year, until the end of December 1999.

I should be grateful if you would bring this letter to the attention of the members of the Security Council.

(Signed) Kofi A. ANNAN